

Christianity and Crisis

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Are Americans Too Critical of America?

RECENTLY *Life* complained that there is too much self-criticism in the West, especially among Americans, and in answer to this self-criticism mentioned several grounds for confidence in the essential morality of the aims and policies of this country. The points emphasized in defense of America were the Marshall Plan, the willingness to share control of atomic power. Also Britain's withdrawal from most of her Asiatic empire and the emergence of the United Nations were cited as evidences of moral health in the Western World. Each one of these points does suggest a ground for real confidence and it is good that they were brought out together in this way. It is unfortunate that even in this moderate statement of the moral case for the West, there is an entirely simple contrast between the moral purposes of America and the West with "the immoral purposes and power of the Soviet Union." To put the matter in that way is to turn a sound attitude of confidence into what appears, to much of the world, to be an infuriating self-righteousness that has lost all sight of the development of modern Communism as a human fact, which is what it is, in part, because of the moral failures of the middle class world.

There is a religious context in which there cannot be too much self-criticism, context in which one sees oneself and one's nation—not in comparison with other persons or other nations—but under the judgment of God. It is an essential part of the Christian life that we begin with our own sins and not with those of our neighbors. The General Confession emphasizes *we* not *they*. When this principle is applied to nations there is a double difficulty. On the one hand, there is special need of this spirit of repentance among nations because nations are so sorely tempted to see the world in quite false colors, to divide it into zones that are black and white. In the case of America the natural tendency is not only to assume a superior righteousness, but also to assume that all things American are best, from plumbing to political institutions. This is in part the result of the staggering external success of America in recent years, and of the contrast between that success and the rather condescending attitude of the old world to American culture. The pride of Amer-

ica, combined with a good deal of insecurity, is often insufferable. So, the correction of this pride becomes a special responsibility of the Christian church. But the other side of the difficulty is that what is said about a nation in terms of self-criticism in this religious context is overheard by those who translate it into comparative political and moral judgments. Then, in the case of American self-criticism, it may often sound like Russian propaganda. And it may be used by many confused people in America to support the tendency to see only the worst side of American life. It is never balanced by Russian or Communist confessions of sin!

There is another context in which rigorous American self-criticism also has a necessary place: it is the clear recognition of the depth of our own national problems and the precariousness of the good in our national life. This can be said without denying that good and without encouraging cynicism or despair about America. This kind of self-criticism is constructive and is itself a mark of health. It would only be possible in a community in which there is very real freedom. If we do not criticize America in these ways we will be unprepared to do what must be done. It is better for Americans to keep in mind the words in Barbara Ward's *The West at Bay*: "The United States has not yet had its slump—that is true: equally it has given little enough proof so far that it knows how to avoid one," than it would be to echo the words which she quotes from Calvin Coolidge's message to Congress in 1928: "No Congress of the United States ever assembled . . . has met with a more pleasing prospect than that which appears at the present time." Certainly it is necessary for Americans to stress the deep and tragic character of the race problem in both the north and the south, not to give comfort to the people around the world who see only our failures here, but to make possible necessary action. To use another illustration, it would be ostrich-like if we did not emphasize ways in which the sources of the best in American culture are drying up through the secularization of the mind of America and through the overwhelming pressure of technology upon education.

There are several stereotyped criticisms of Amer-

ica, often echoed by Americans themselves, which do need to be refuted. One is the criticism that is based upon a very one-sided understanding of our White-Negro problem. What needs to be said in addition to the portrayal of the depth and tragic nature of the problem is that there are many factors in American life that are favorable to racial justice. The recent record of the courts, especially the Supreme Court, and the political power that the Negroes now have in many states and in national politics would be a surprise to many of the critics.

Another stereotype arises out of the very fact of American power. It is frequently said that American power and Russian power are twin evils and that there is not much to choose between them. But there is a vast difference between power that is bound by no law and that is not subject to free moral criticism at home or affected by world public opinion on the one hand, and power that is regularly subject to these restraints. The widespread self-criticism in America is itself a sign that Ameri-

can power is qualitatively different from the power exercised by a totalitarian state. When it is misused there will be opportunities for redress and there is always hope that pressure from abroad and political pressure within America may correct it. American power is consistent with wide areas of freedom and openness.

These are grounds for hope. But thoughtful Americans may well be concerned about the difficulty of their nation's having either wisdom to match its power or the consistent willingness or patience to do what such wisdom demands. To say this is not to be critical of America but rather to call attention to the fact that never before has so much depended upon the conscious decisions of the governmental agencies or the electorate of a single nation. What could be more sobering than reflecting upon this degree of national responsibility? To face this fact squarely ought to be a cure for false national pride and it should give us understanding of the fears of many whose fate depends upon our decisions. J. C. B.

The Christian Education Problem Today

E. G. HOMRIGHAUSEN

THE decision of the Supreme Court in the United States declaring it to be illegal to teach religion in school buildings or on school time is of epochal significance. The full ramifications of such a position on the part of the state are yet to be seen. The discussion will no doubt be intensified in the years ahead. Whether this will mean the eradication of religious references from such subjects as history, art, literature, and other fields is a question. As yet, there seems to be no indication that the United States has officially taken a hostile attitude toward religion; it has simply declared itself neutral and a protector of minority rights in religious matters. No doubt, a great deal of religion will still be taught in the public schools of the United States, at least so long as no complaints are registered against the practice in particular communities. At least, the United States is on the road toward a complete separation of religion from education. This will mean a secularized education. The churches must become alert to this problem, and especially guard against the introduction into education of what might be termed a religionless spirit and practice, for this would be a form of education which might easily take on the form of religion.

This problem is not confined to the United States. In Europe the issue of church and state regarding

education is acute. There is no uniform educational pattern in European countries. Once the church was the sole educator of the people. But the state has increasingly taken over the schools. In many cases, it has allowed religious instruction in the schools, as a compulsory discipline to be taught either by pastors of the recognized churches in the community or by qualified lay teachers. Such instruction is financed by the tax funds, since religious education is regarded as a necessary part of cultural training. Usually, the adherents of smaller religious groups have not been allowed to instruct their children in the schools, and they have been discriminated against by the legally accepted church denominations.

One of the first countries in Europe to nationalize its schools was France. Here the Catholic teaching orders are prohibited by law in the state schools. Catholics have several colleges and lower schools which they support. Theological schools are supported by the churches, except in Strassbourg where the state provides the faculties, both Catholic and Protestant, according to the German tradition. Under Petain, Catholic influence became strong in the French schools. The tension has grown, however, since the liberation. Should DeGaulle come to power, Catholicism would be introduced into the

schools again. While the Protestant churches still have a few schools, most of the schools are community-controlled, from which religion is excluded. Moral training is substituted. In Italy, the religion taught in schools is Catholic, which is regarded as the religion of the Italian state. The Waldensians have ten elementary schools, two secondary schools, four Froebel institutes, some mountain village schools, and a theological seminary in Rome. In Belgium, the Protestants have seventeen elementary schools in all, established since the war. These are supported by the government which pays the teachers, providing they are native Belgians holding all the requirements. Such schools must offer the syllabus required by the state. All other state schools provide two hours of Catholic instruction, but Protestant teachers are allowed to teach Protestant children. In Spain and Portugal Catholic instruction is compulsory, a rule which works hardships upon Protestants. Portugal allows churches to have their own schools attached to the church building to provide a very elementary kind of education.

The Western Zone of Germany continues the pre-war practice of allowing religious instruction in the public schools, although serious efforts are being undertaken by the churches to safeguard this instruction from usurpation by the state. The churches prepare or approve textbooks and programs of religious education. They may protest against the teaching of false doctrines or anti-ecclesiastical behavior on the part of teachers. Where the church is strong, whether Protestant or Catholic, a teacher may be dismissed if unsuitable to the church. The Catholic church in Bavaria insists upon teachers with sound doctrinal training teaching religious courses. Evangelical churches have few schools for general education. In some sections of the Western Zones Evangelical and Catholic teacher training schools are to be found. Several theological seminaries (*Kirchliche Hochschulen*) are in operation in Germany, supported by voluntary gifts and not dependent upon the state.

In the Russian Zone, no religious education is permitted in the schools. Religious education is done after school hours through voluntary teachers. Already over 2,500 lay catechists have been trained to do this kind of teaching, and it is hoped to train as many as 1,500 more. Out of a total of 1,300,000 children living in this zone, perhaps one million are receiving this instruction in Bible, church history, music and other vital matters. It is unfortunate that in the Russian Zone only 400 students are permitted to study theology, and these must come from the working classes.

In the Eastern countries of Europe, a different situation obtains. In all of these countries the recognized churches were subsidized by the state. Many of them are now passing through a time of radical

change: subsidies are being withdrawn, religious education in the schools is being forbidden, the churches are being forced to support themselves, and an education is offered by the state which is anything but Christian in emphasis. In Jugoslavia, religious education, which was obligatory before the war, has been discontinued. Private and church schools are prohibited. In Bulgaria, the same rule applies, although one Methodist school has been allowed to continue its religious program. In Poland, still dominantly Roman Catholic, instruction by priests is still provided in the schools, but it is not compulsory. Most children attend these classes. The University has its theological faculties, and the Methodists and Baptists each have one Bible or lay training school.

In Roumania, there are now no confessional schools. Public education is entirely in the hands of the state. One may add that in Bucharest there is also a decreasing number of people presenting themselves for confirmation; for instance, last year 70 to 80 confirmation candidates were reported whereas this year there are only 30. There is a decrease in the number of Christian marriages and baptisms. On the other hand, there are more churchgoers now than there were when the membership of the church was two and three times as many.

Hungary has recently passed through a serious crisis regarding education. Sixty per cent of the elementary schools and fifty per cent of the higher schools were owned and administered by the churches. The Reformed Church, consisting of twenty per cent of the population, had a vast educational system covering the whole field of education, from infants' classes to university entrance examinations, as well as a number of technical and professional colleges. The Lutherans have one large educational center and a number of schools. The new government has accused these schools of propagating illiteracy, and of offering a kind of education which may have been religious, but which lacked the social and economic emphases commensurate with the new order of life. By a law passed in 1948, all these schools are to be taken over and compensation given to the churches by the state.

"A total of 4,474 denominational schools have passed to the control of Hungary's Communist-dominated government as the result of nationalization legislation adopted recently by the Hungarian parliament. The schools, classified as lower grade, elementary, day, grammar or so-called general schools, comprised 2,797 Roman Catholic, 1,097 Reformed, and 597 Jewish or Greek Orthodox institutions. In addition there was a lone confessional school maintained by the Unitarian Church. About 650,000 children attended the church schools, representing 61.5 percent of all Hungarian school children. Staffs included 15,000 teachers. Head teachers in the denominational schools were automatical-

ly retained by the Ministry of Education when the nationalization law was adopted, and all teachers were scheduled to pass into state employment by July 1. Salaries of teachers were raised 20 percent on August 1. State authorities have also taken over 52 Roman Catholic, 24 Reformed, 11 Evangelical and 3 Jewish high schools, with 1,718 teachers. However, 20 to 25 percent of the confessional high schools, including a few girls' colleges, have been exempted from the nationalization program, and will remain controlled by the churches. Under planned agreements with the churches, the state will continue to pay subsidies to these schools." (Religious News Service).

The Lutheran and Roman Catholic Churches have protested against this nationalization, but it is doubtful if they will hold their schools. The teaching of religion is to be continued in the schools, although public grants of money will diminish over a period of 20 years on a diminishing scale.

In Czechoslovakia all denominational schools were to be nationalized (although some have remained in church control), but religious education in the schools will continue with the provision that parents who desire it may have their children exempted. Religious education is in the hands of the churches; teachers are qualified and paid by the state. Churches which have as many as 20 children of their religious persuasion in a school may have religious instruction provided for them.

In Finland, where 99 percent of the people belong to the one Lutheran Church, religious instruction is offered in all schools. Such instruction is most effective, since it is coupled with its warm evangelical spirit and with strong home training. Two excellent Sunday School teacher training institutions are located in Jarvanpää and Larkkulla, Finland. The same condition obtains in Sweden, although it must be said that secularism has grown considerably in Sweden in recent years. At a recent conference in Geneva, of the Parliamentary Commission on Education Reform, Mrs. Alva Myrdal, spoke of the reforms that are taking place in the teaching of religion in the schools of Sweden. Those responsible for such teaching reforms in Norway, have established a research institute for the same purpose in Oslo. The same conditions are to be found in Denmark. It is not enough to offer two hours of religious instruction in the schools per week. Methodology is of utmost importance.

The new educational law in England has brought religion back into the schools in a general way. All schools open with an act of worship. Religious instruction is given in provided and non-provided schools, although fullest liberty is granted parents to withdraw their children from such education. The Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church and the Free Churches own and administer many

schools, both elementary and secondary. In 1938, the Church of England had 39,000 elementary schools, the Catholics had 1,250, the Free Churches 300, and the Jews 12. The Church of England, in the same year, had 240 of the 380 secondary schools. There are 80-odd teacher training schools of which two-thirds are under the auspices of churches or other voluntary bodies. In Scotland there are few church schools remaining since 1918, except among the Roman Catholics. Religious education is provided in the schools for all children, except for those who are prevented by parental action.

Holland has six Protestant schools with 700 students. Some are subsidized by the state. In all state schools, religious instruction is given, but it is not compulsory. Dutch Sunday schools now number 250,000 pupils, Youth Churches enroll about 150,000. In Switzerland, each of the 22 cantons has its own educational program in which religious instruction is offered for the recognized churches. A two-year course of confirmation instruction is given to all youths joining the church, usually at the age of 16 or 17.

In this fragmentary picture of education in Europe, one can sense the issues which the church confronts in fulfilling its educational task. 1) There is the growing tendency among modern states to regard all education as their sole responsibility. 2) Much of modern education is oriented towards a new order of society, which is based upon an ideology that is other than Christian. 3) The churches are being thrown back upon their own resources in providing religious education for their own people. This task requires unity and sacrifice and strategy. 4) The churches must find new ways of exercising their responsibility towards general education, lest it become divorced completely from Christian, and even theistic, assumptions. 5) The churches must find better and more effective ways of teaching Christianity to their own people. 6) The churches must realize that Christian education is an essential in our day, when moral standards are deteriorating, when confusion of mind regarding the ends of life reigns and when radically secular philosophies are being taught to the oncoming generation. 7) Perhaps the greatest problem confronting the churches is that which concerns the meaning of Christian education. What is Christian education? To what extent can Christianity be taught in schools which are attended by non-Christians? How can Christianity be taught in state schools according to law, and retain its liberty?

There is no satisfactory solution anywhere to the problems which the church confronts in its educational task. The picture varies from country to country, but the problems are the same. If we would work toward their solution, we must apply ourselves unitedly to the task, and mutually understand and support each other wherever we live and work.

Can We Abolish Jim Crow in Armed Services?

S. MACON COWLES, Jr.

THE President's Civil Rights Report declares: "Prejudice in any area is an ugly, undemocratic phenomenon; in the armed services, where all men run the risk of death, it is particularly repugnant." To this, most liberal Christians will heartily assent. Indeed, many of us who as chaplains served Negro units and were often embarrassed by the forms of discrimination we witnessed are strongly sympathetic with the stand taken by Phillip Randolph regarding Jim Crow practices in the service.

Of course, officially there is no discrimination. The Navy claims, for example, that "No distinction is made between individuals wearing a naval uniform because of race or color. The Navy accepts no theory of racial differences in inborn ability, but expects that every man wearing its uniform be trained and used in accordance with his maximum individual capacity determined on the basis of individual performance." But the figures are often better indicators of official policy than pious pronouncements. The President's Report notes that four out of five of the Negro men in the Navy are assigned to duty as cooks, stewards, and steward's mates. Less than two in a hundred of the whites are assigned to such duty. It can rightfully be questioned whether 80 percent of the colored boys are being used to their "maximum individual capacity" when so assigned to kitchen and dining room service. Is it possible that a certain stigma has been attached to these darker men?

The proportion of rated to non-rated men is also significant. Says the Report: "15 percent of all white enlisted marines are in the three highest grades; less than 2½ percent of the Negro marines fall in the same category." The disparity is also great in the Navy and Coast Guard, but not so pronounced in the Army. Likewise the number of commissioned officers in proportion to the number of men in service is vastly lower for Negroes than for whites. Proportionately ten times more white men in the Army are commissioned than are colored men. In the other branches of service the number of Negro officers is negligible. These figures speak for themselves. Because of educational differences we might expect some disparity, but it is quite evident that we have too often considered them as second class citizens, incapable of leadership even over their own men. These forms of discrimination in overall policy plus the little day by day injustices which a minority feels so keenly have made Negroes somewhat less enthusiastic about national defense and have sent many of them back to civilian life embittered by their service experience.

In our zeal for more equitable treatment of our

darker brothers we must not make the error of trying to divorce in-service practice from civilian practice. Even if a genuine change of heart were to be effected in top military circles—and we do not doubt that there are now some men of genuine insight and vision in higher circles—the new policy would be impossible to enforce so long as the bulk of the citizens in service were prejudiced and accepted all the little forms of discrimination practiced in civilian life. A Negro who had been in one of the Navy Seabee stevedoring battalions served by the author puts the matter thus: "I can't conceive of any law being passed to make one man like another." That is blunt and oversimplified, but it contains the nub of the matter, nonetheless. It is one thing to legislate against discrimination and it is quite another to enforce peace and unity and goodwill in a mixed unit of men long trained in prejudice. The point is that you cannot simply isolate the military practice and deal with it separately. The carry-over from civilian life is too great; it must be taken into our calculations if we are to be realistic.

In this connection we ought to bear in mind the prevailing pattern in our American culture. The situation in the South has been much publicized and is familiar to the readers of this journal. Perhaps progress there will be more rapid if, having pricked the consciences of Southern liberals we leave it to them to work out a more acceptable policy. Suffice it to say that the impassioned reaction of Southern congressmen to the President's mild civil rights program is indicative of the distance we have yet to go. But those of us in the other sections of the country have no grounds for complacency. Our forms of discrimination are more subtle, but they are ever-present.

While working in a northern steel mill during the war I noted that Negroes were never found in either clerical or skilled positions. They were lumped with the mass of unskilled workers and paid accordingly. Little encouragement was given for advancement. This policy was assumed and no one thought to question it.

Carried over into the military field this assumption may become the source of real friction. This was seen, for example when it appeared that Negroes were more frequently given the difficult and dangerous job of handling the ammunition. Our colored stevedores had it impressed upon them in various ways. One shipload of supplies arrived at our Pacific base with machinery and heavy equipment in the upper part of the holds and bags of cement in the lower. The equipment required a minimum of labor and a maximum of skill. The

opposite was true of the cement; it was a dirty and tedious job which required a minimum of skill. A battalion of white stevedores handled the former and then the ship was moved to our dock so that the Negro boys could handle the latter. There was much sputtering and not a little bitterness. Who is to blame for this sort of thing? It is not so much Navy policy as it is American policy. It is only a little more obvious and repugnant when witnessed in service. We are inclined to assume uncritically that the darker boys are serving in their "maximum individual capacity" when they are doing manual labor.

In the steel mill one Negro was deemed by the personnel department capable of a skilled position and he was assigned to the painting department. But the white painters were jealous of their position and their rights. They let it be known that they would not cooperate with the Negro, whereupon he was sent back to the labor force. When you understand the caste structure of Negro military units you can readily see how this attitude results in an inequality of opportunity. The commissioned officers are at the top. They occupy the choice camp site into which territory non-commissioned men are not allowed to enter. They have their own officers' club and bar, Negro stewards to take care of their huts and to wait on their tables. Next are the chief petty officers, also with a choice spot and their own club. The latter men are both the most indispensable leaders and the most exclusive set in the outfit. Next is a company of white men who make up the service corps—supply, disbursement, transportation, personnel, laundry, et cetera. These are the rated men, the clerks, white collar workers and skilled technicians. At the bottom are the companies of Negro labor supply. Most of these men begin without ratings.

The lines are not always so closely drawn in other branches of the service, but this is at least an indication of the general pattern. There is a constant pressure from the bottom by men who want to better their status, and often a reluctance on the part of those above and in control to allow new ratings. This is particularly true of the exclusive set of chiefs. It is unthinkable to them that a colored man should rise to their status and invade their sacred precincts. A commanding officer is courting trouble with his indispensable chiefs if he allows this to occur. It doesn't occur—in spite of official Navy policy. In one battalion there were a number of Negroes who had exemplary character, perfect records, and many months of overseas duty, but were never recommended for this rating. No Negro in either unit ever made chief, though it was a frequent occurrence with whites. Who, then, is to blame for this? Certainly the fault is not solely with the military. Must we not lay the major blame on the culture which bred men of this kind?

There are many other examples of civilian prejudices which are carried over into military life. In many cities Negroes may not attend downtown theatres. This is true in the nation's capital. In the Pacific two Negro units of the type described above built an outdoor cement basketball court. They were proud of their teams and they stood high in their league. They had built the court in off hours and when the bleachers were finally set in place the officer in charge of construction had had the first two rows painted white. On these was painted in large letters, "Whites Only." In the midst of a war for democracy and freedom of opportunity there was something distinctly incongruous about this. The chaplain protested to the officer in charge and the order was given to paint all the seats white, removing distinctions altogether. But who was going to see that the order was carried out? The white personnel was distinctly cool to the idea. Finally the deed was accomplished unofficially at night. Thus Jim Crow in service is an inevitable outgrowth of Jim Crow in civilian life.

Most embarrassing of all to Christians is the deep involvement of the churches in this pattern. We make bold pronouncements and talk much about brotherhood. One might well expect to find the churches to be islands of goodwill, spearheads of social advance. Actually you can still count on your fingers the number of churches which in tension areas have worked out an acceptable solution to the race problem in their own fellowships. Segregation is still the practice and that is certainly not acceptable by any ultimate norms.

With the racial situation what it is in the United States one has a right to ask whether it is reasonable to insist that the armed services eliminate discrimination. The military makes no pretense at virtue, it claims no excess of charity, its leaders have never been known for their social vision. Yet we are insisting that they adopt a policy that is far out ahead of our churches and our civilian communities generally. In correspondence with Negro ex-service men I have asked whether they believed a policy of non-segregation and absolute equality could be enforced. One said frankly, "No," his reason being that this is a matter that too closely concerns the hearts of men. Without change of heart there can be no real change of policy. The other said, "Yes," given the right conditions. I am inclined to agree with the latter. The former view would leave little room for social progress. Not only does the new heart create enlightened policy, but it is also true that an enlightened policy may help to create a new heart. Social change cannot wait for the universal change of heart; nor on the other hand can social change advance too far ahead of the common mentality.

It would seem that we are going too far if we insist right now on a sweeping and indiscriminate

application of a policy of non-segregation throughout the armed services. A good policy in the hands of artless and unsympathetic leaders can do the cause irreparable harm.

However, certain steps can and should be taken. The admissions policy at both the military and naval academies should be liberalized. In its history, West Point has admitted only 37 Negroes, Annapolis only 6. A less discriminatory policy would make for more mingling of the races in upper military levels. It would soon make for more understanding, more trust, and a more sympathetic approach. These institutions should broaden and deepen their instruction in race relations. Likewise, men of minority races should be given every opportunity and encouragement to train, specialize, and advance in whatever type of service they prefer.

In the matter of segregation, though it may not be advisable to attempt a wholesale change now, the government should make clear to the people the

direction in which it is moving. A significant number of experimental units could be established with hand picked officers and men of varied racial groups to demonstrate that they can work together amicably and effectively. These experiments ought to be honest and sincere attempts to work out a policy without discrimination. As satisfactory methods are developed and more men are trained, the plan could be broadened gradually over a period of years. If wisely and sympathetically administered, these units could constitute a significant educational factor in American life and lead a little nearer to the solution many of us so desire. In any event, an enormous responsibility rests with all liberal Christians, in service and out. Jim Crow in the armed services must be seen in relation to the prevailing Jim Crow thought patterns in our culture. Our churches have a job to do. As a minimum they must demonstrate a true sense of brotherhood within their fellowship.

The World Church: News and Notes

Hromadka Assures Czechs On World Council

Dr. Josef Hromadka, dean of the John Hus Faculty in Prague, declared in an interview that the newly-constituted World Council of Churches is "not going to be used as a weapon against Communist-dominated countries." The Czech churchman was a delegate to the recent First Assembly of the World Council at Amsterdam, Holland.

"From our point of view," he said, "this is of great importance, because there are numerous attempts being made to impose on the World Council of Churches religious sanction for a crusade against the East."

Declaring that the principle of non-interference with member churches had been established in the World Council, Dr. Hromadka said that delegates at the Amsterdam Assembly had recognized that revolutionary changes are taking place in the social structure and that it is impossible to stop them. R. N. S.

Prayer for the United Nations

The Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, at its meeting on September 21, urged that special prayers of intercession be offered throughout the deliberations of the United Nations General Assembly now meeting in Paris.

"In the battle against international disorder men deeply need Christianity's spiritual dynamic. . . . With the United Nations what it is and what it can be, Christians must not lack confidence nor fail in their support, whoever else may lose heart and become defeatist."

The Executive Committee voted to join in an international petition of voluntary organizations in behalf of a United Nations Convention on Genocide for the prevention and punishment of deliberate and systematic destruction of racial, national, religious, linguistic and political groups.

Progressive Christians Hold First International Assembly

The Union of Progressive Christians, a group of intellectuals who maintain that Christianity and Marxism are not incompatible, held its first international assembly in Paris. Attending were a number of French priests and delegates from Italy, Poland and Belgium.

The Union, which recently sponsored a statement calling for common action between Christians and Communists to solve France's economic problems, has been strongly criticized by Catholic Church authorities in France, but so far it has not been subjected to any official ban. R. N. S.

Denominational Schools Ordered Closed in Berlin

The Berlin education administration has ordered the closing of all denominational schools in the city.

A decree issued by municipal educational officials charged that a number of church schools had reopened on September 1 without previously notifying the Allied authorities, or obtaining the sanction of city officials.

Meanwhile, the Berlin chairman of the Christian Democratic Union, which embraces both Protestants and Roman Catholics, has protested "police measures to force parents to send their children to public schools."

The CDU official declared he was opposed "to any attempt to delay or prevent the lawful establishment of private schools." R. N. S.

Vatican Willing to Renew Relations With Russia

The Vatican is willing to renew diplomatic relations with Russia, "despite everything," *Osservatore Romano*, official Vatican newspaper in Rome, has declared.

Osservatore's statement was in response to a charge by Ambrogio Donati, Communist supporter and former

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Italian ambassador to Poland, that Vatican policy is "aimed at the destruction of Communism and of the U.S.S.R." Donati's accusation appeared in L'Unita, Italian Communist Party organ.

The Vatican newspaper said the Holy See is willing to enter into friendly relations with Russia "as soon as possible," just as with all other countries.

It stressed that the conditions for an understanding with the U.S.S.R. are the same as those applicable to other nations—namely, full freedom for the Catholic Church to carry on its religious ministry to operate schools, and to engage in religious propaganda.

R. N. S.

Reformed Bishop Pledges Loyalty to Hungarian State

Loyalty to the new Hungarian State was pledged by Dr. Albert Bereczky, newly-elected Bishop of the Danubian District of the Hungarian Reformed Church, at his inauguration in Budapest.

The rites took place in the Central Reformed Church in Calvin Square, and were witnessed by top-government leaders as well as numerous representatives of

the Reformed Church. State officials present included President Arpad Szakasits, Minister of Cults Julius Ortutay, and President of the National Assembly Imre Nagy.

In an address to a special District Assembly following his inauguration, Bishop Bereczky declared that the Reformed Church "accepts the new situation in the socialist state of democratic Hungary," and said the church will cooperate with the State "in whatever ways are offered by God."

R. N. S.

American Zionist Chief "Shocked" by Secretary Marshall's "Unqualified Endorsement" of Mediator's Recommendations

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council, today wired an appeal to President Truman "to prevent the imposition of such iniquitous terms on Israel" as the Bernadotte plan recommended "and to stand by the pledged word . . . of the American Government which accepted without reservation the November 29 decision and which on May 14 gave *de facto* recognition to the new State of Israel."

Dr. Silver's protest against Secretary Marshall's recent endorsement of the Bernadotte report which would give the Negev area now in the State of Israel, to the Arabs was made in behalf of all official Zionist bodies in the United States.

Pointing out that the Zionist movement in his country had "relied on the loyalty of the American Government to the United Nations partition resolution of last November," and on the personal commitment of the President and the platform pledges of the Democratic Party, Dr. Silver noted that "we have accordingly been profoundly shocked by Secretary Marshall's unqualified endorsement of the recommendations of Count Bernadotte which would reduce the area of the State of Israel by two-thirds leaving it a miniature state incapable of large scale settlement of refugees."

South African Presbyterians Denounce Race Discrimination

Policies of the South African government allegedly intended to deprive native Africans of their constitutional rights were denounced in a resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in South Africa, which met at Pretoria.

The resolution said the assembly "views with alarm and sorrow proposals by the government to deprive Africans of their present parliamentary representation and to take from colored people their long-established and pledged right to vote."

Stressing that "this is a matter on which the Christian church can speak with an undivided voice," lay delegate L. Patterson declared that "South Africa will never be a country as long as it is considered as belonging to one race or section of the community."

R. N. S.

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